

REMARKS

Claims 21-26 and 28-34 are pending in the present application. Claims 21-29 stand rejected because of informalities. Claims 22-24, 28 and 30-32 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Therefore, claims 21 and 29 have been amended. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of these amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 25, 26, 33 and 34 have been allowed. Applicants appreciate this indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner.

Regarding claims 21 and 29, the phrase "an upper percentage above 10% to 20%", has been amended for purposes of clarification. As discussed in Applicants' Amendment of Oct. 16, 2003, the claimed invention breaks away from conventional teachings by including a silicided surface of a bonding pad, where the silicided surface ranges from above 10% and up to about 20% of the bonding pad. More explicit language, consistent with Applicants' previous discussion, has now been incorporated into these claims.

In view of the amendments to claims 21 and 29, it is also respectfully believed that claims 22-24, 28 and 30-32 are in allowable form.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 21-26 and 28-34, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

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Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary.

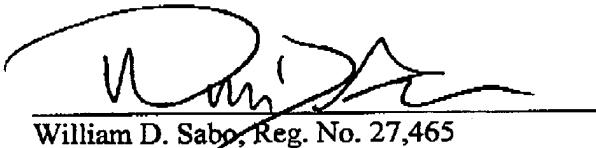
Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayments to Attorney's Deposit Account Number 09-0456.

Respectfully submitted,

For: Armbrust et al

Date: March 23, 2004

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